

Violent ideologies

Linguistic evaluative patterns and psychopathology in perpetrators of mass violence

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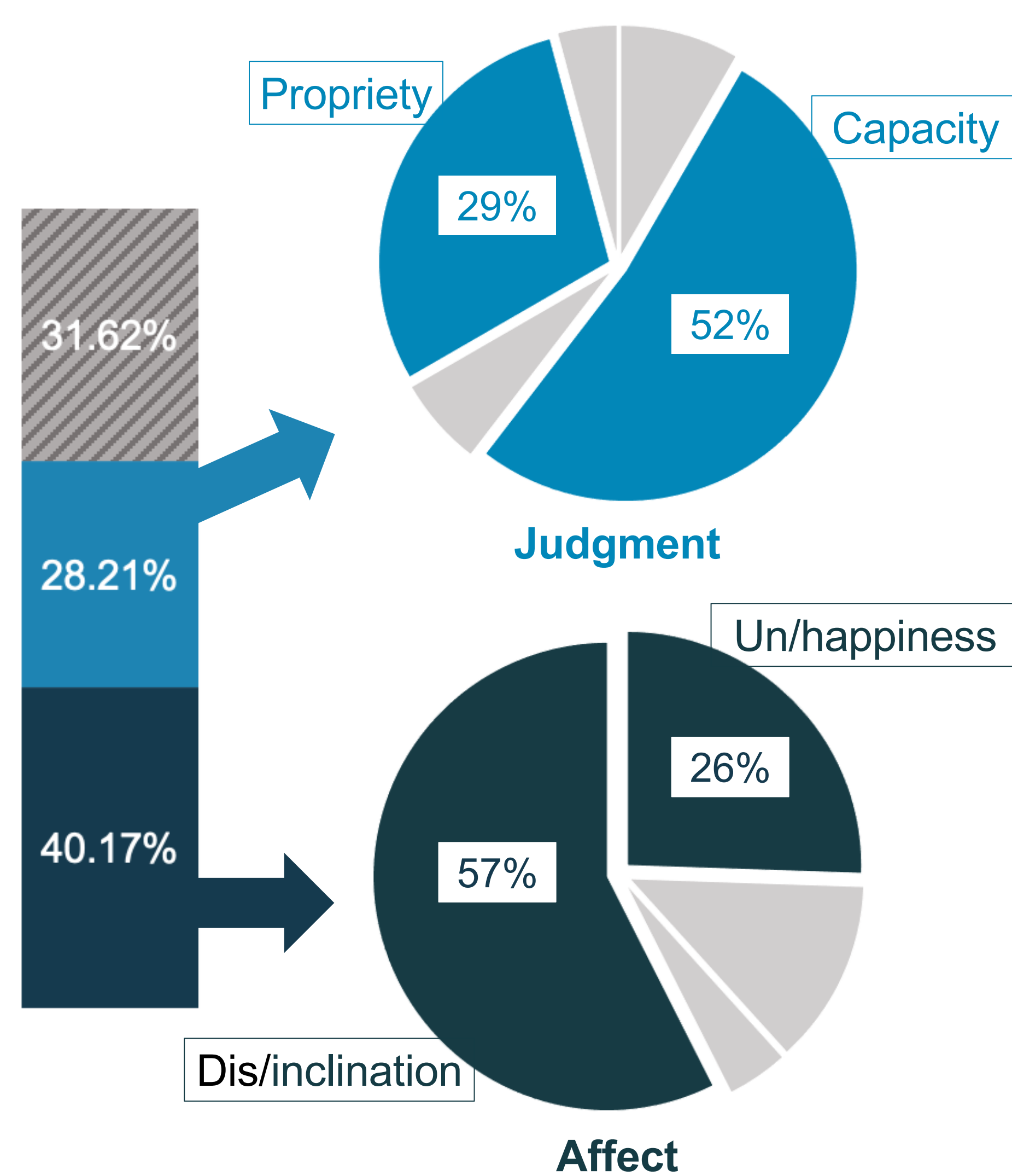
An individual's collective set of psychological traits, or their *psychopathology*, impacts how they experience the world; how they interact with it and how they interpret information from it. Language offers a means by which that experience—and the individual's feelings and attitudes (i.e., their *stances*¹) toward it—can be shared with others.

This research aims to determine if there is an observable relationship between the patterns of linguistic choices one makes to express their stances the psychological traits that influence them.

The four authors in this study were perpetrators of acts of mass violence and psychological assessments were conducted on each of them during their respective trials. All four were found to exhibit signs of psychotic symptoms—i.e., *delusions* and/or *hallucinations*—and all but Holmes additionally exhibited signs of depressive symptoms^{2;3;4;5}. The dataset consisted of personal writings, totaling between 500-1000 words for each author, which were analyzed using Appraisal Analysis⁶.

This approach is designed to be an assessment tool of forensic texts (used in conjunction with forensic psychological and linguistic assessments) to help narrow down suspect pools through identification of potential psychological *traits* of the author.

Alvaro Castillo



JUDGMENT

Capacity

Harm, power(lessness), (in)ability

Castillo: *I just killed my father/ I know I am sick*

Holmes: *Despite my biological shortcomings/ Decided to dedicate life to killing others*

Hribal: *I spread the word of a god, Eric Harris/ making your fellow man suffer*

Kinkel: *I am so close to killing people! I am strong, but my head just doesn't work right*

Propriety

Good and Evil

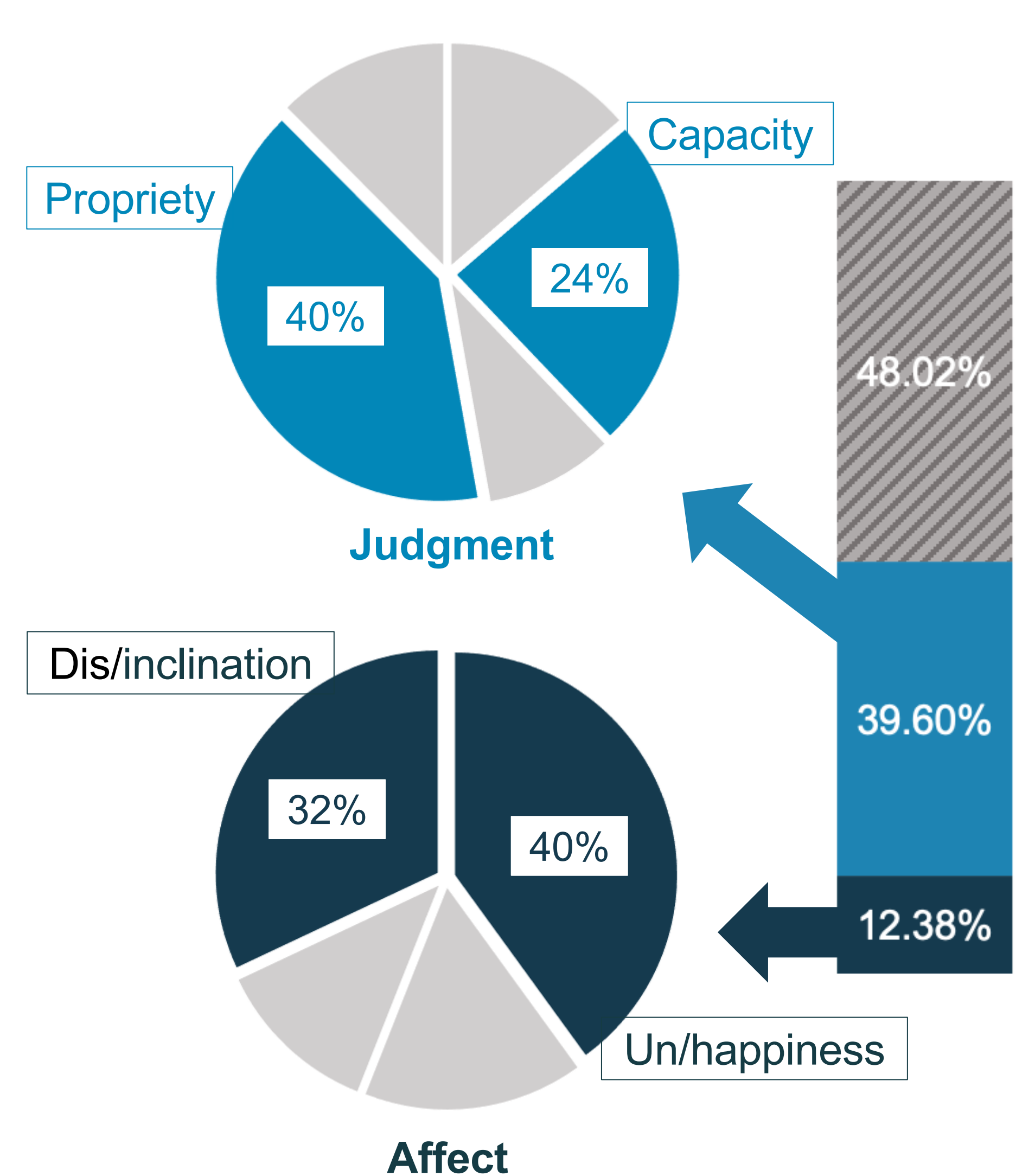
Castillo: *I don't deserve her though. I do not deserve anyone*

Holmes: *Can't tell the mind rapists plan; a dark k/night rises*

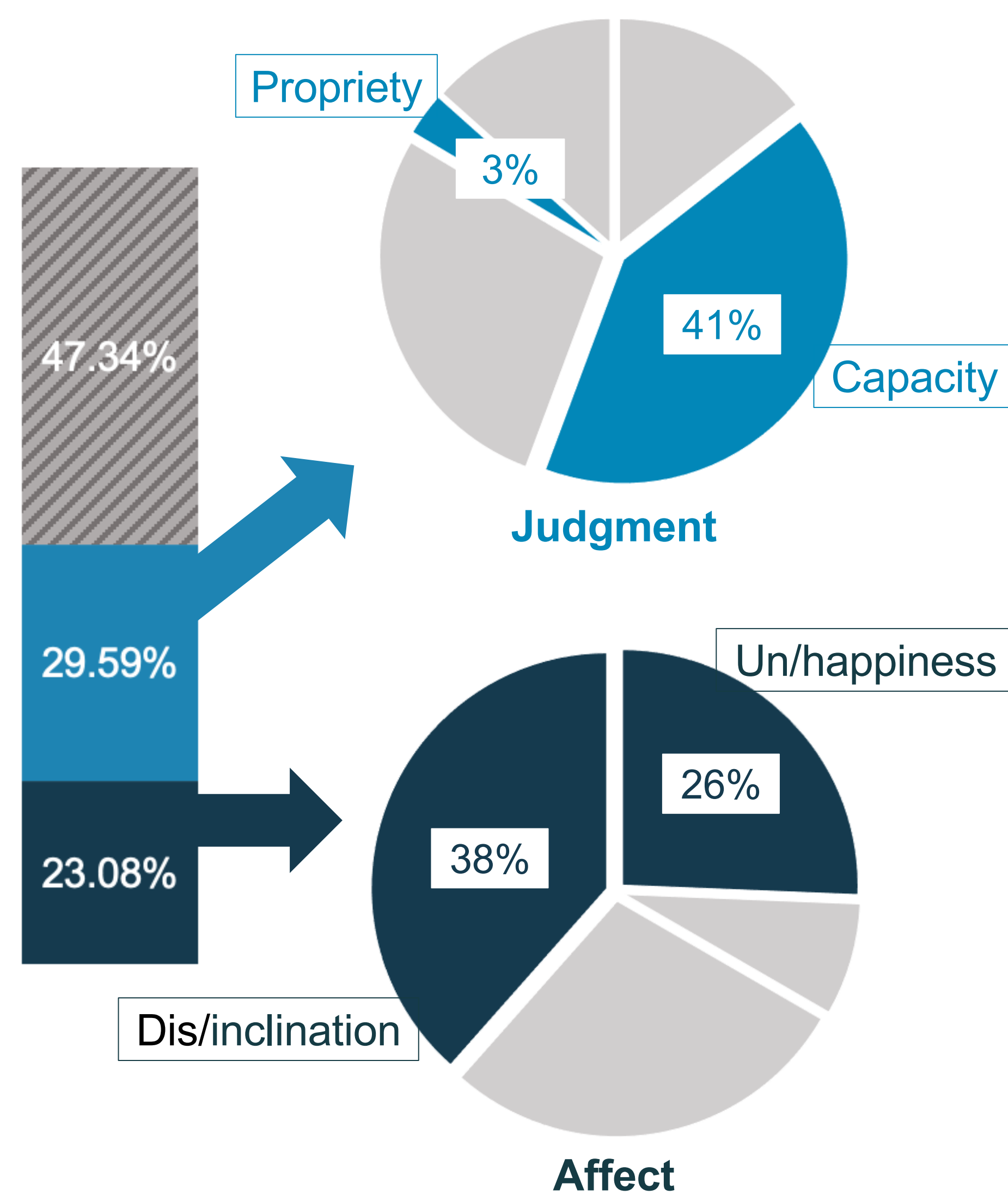
Hribal: *[I] am taking revenge on them; they only care about themselves*

Kinkel: *All humans are evil; I am evil*

Alex Hribal



James Holmes



AFFECT

Un/happiness

Love, hate, sadness

Castillo: *I drown my sadness and depression with work...*

Holmes: *Longstanding hatred of mankind*

Hribal: *People stain the world with sins for fun*

Kinkel: *I am so consumed with hate all of the time*

Dis/inclination

Intent, desire, fear

Castillo: *I am going to commit suicide*

Holmes: *No more fear, hatred unlocked*

Hribal: *I can't wait to see the priceless and helpless looks on the faces of the students*

Kinkel: *This is how I will repay all you motherfuckers*

Kip Kinkel

